PSYC E-1016 - Trauma and Development - Spring 2011

Instructor: Manuel S. Sprung  
Time: Wednesday, 5:30–7:30 pm
E-mail: msprung@wjh.harvard.edu  
Location: Northwest Science Building B101
Office Hours: By appointment  
TF: Anne Wilson (anne.wilson80@gmail.com)

Course Website

The URL for the course website is: http://isites.harvard.edu/k77861 Please check the website regularly for announcements, syllabus changes, etc.

Contact

Please feel free to email me with questions. I don’t usually check email after about 5:30pm on weeknights or very much at all on the weekends. But I’ll do my best to get back to you as soon as I can. I’m very happy to meet with you during the semester. Just email me and we can set up a time that works well for both of us.

General Information

For many years there has been strong interest in traumatic stress in children and adolescents. Numerous scientific studies investigate the impact of traumatic stress on development. The purpose of this course is to survey developmental and clinical research and theory on child traumatic stress and the impact of psychological trauma on development. Traumatic stress and its impact on development will be addressed following different potentially traumatic events, such as natural or manmade disasters, maltreatment, community and school violence, war and refugee trauma, terrorism, traumatic loss of a loved one, serious illness and accidents. First, the course will attend to question such as: What are potentially traumatic events and how common are these events in childhood and adolescence? What are the consequences of child traumatic stress? What are symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder and other disorders linked to child traumatic stress? What is the neurobiology of child traumatic stress. Then cognitive, emotional and social risk factors, as well as resilience and posttraumatic growth following psychological trauma in childhood will be addressed. Cultural and social aspects of child trauma stress will also be considered. Finally, the literature on psychological interventions following traumatic events and prevention of traumatic stress will be surveyed. In addition, the course will tackle with cognitive aspects of trauma, such as meta-cognition, memory and executive functions.

Course Requirements

Please read the assigned articles before each lecture. Exams will include material from both the readings and the lectures, so lecture attendance is important.

Undergraduate-credit students

Section attendance/participation and participation in in-class discussion will count for 10% of the grade, and response papers will count for 15% of the grade. The midterm examination will count for 35% of the grade, and the final examination will count for 40% of the grade.
**Graduate-credit students**

Section attendance/participation and participation in in-class discussion will count for 10% of the grade, and response papers will count for 15% of the grade. The midterm examination will count for 25% of the grade, and the final examination will count for 25% of the grade. In addition to the midterm and final exam a 10-12 page term paper will be required. The term paper will count for 25% of the grade.

**Section Attendance/Participation and participation in in-class discussion**

Weekly sections will be designed to include opportunities for review of course material, critical thinking about readings and lecture material, and interactive exercises. Most importantly, however, sections will provide an opportunity for guidance on the preparation of the term paper. Moreover, there will also be in-class discussion, and you are also expected to participate in those discussions. The expectations for section participation will be discussed in the second or third lecture, after enrollment numbers and potential TF slots are finalized.

**Response Papers**

At three times during the semester you will be asked to write a 2-3 page paper on a specified topic. Throughout the course we will watch movie clips and films designed to illustrated the concepts discussed in the lectures and readings. In these short papers you will be asked to discuss specific questions about movie clips/film in relationship to lecture materials and readings. Details on the first response paper will be provided during the second week of class.

**Term Paper (Graduate Students only)**

A 10-12-page term paper will be required (see instructions below). You will be required to submit a 1-page preview, 1st draft (10%) and a final draft (15%) by the respective due dates (see below). The term paper should be designed to answer a question related to any topic in the trauma field, preferably one that sparks your interest and one that we did not cover extensively in the course. It must be written in American Psychological Association (APA) format. You should cite relevant scientific articles, chapters, and books. Do not plagiarize! Provide proper citation to works you consult, and include quotation marks, author, year, and page numbers whenever you quote from another’s work. The reference list is not included in the page count. Papers less than 10 pages (typed, double-spaced) are not acceptable. Points will be deducted from papers that are submitted late. 1-page preview due: March 9; 1-st draft due: April 6; Final draft due: May 4

**Midterm Exam --- Final Exam**

The two exams will draw from both the readings and the lectures, and will be all essay questions. A review section may be offered prior to each exam. The review sections will be fueled by student questions, and will not include a formal review of course material by teaching staff. Date of Midterm Exam: March 9; Date of Final Exam: May 11

Grades for each part are assigned on a 100-point scale in which A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F<60.
Policies

In the Classroom
Please come to class on time, and be courteous with electronic devices (e.g., no cell phone use in class, use computers for taking notes only).

Due Dates
Papers must be turned in at the beginning of class (5:30pm) on the day they are due. Any late assignment will receive a full letter grade deduction. Further deductions will follow for each day late. If you cannot complete an assignment due to a medical issue or other emergency, please contact the instructor as soon as you can (before the due date, unless the problem crops up right before class time).

Academic Integrity
It is expected that all of the assignments you turn in for this course will be your own original work and turned in only for this course. Psychology is a cumulative science, and a single article may cite the findings and ideas of dozens of earlier articles. For your own papers, you will be required to draw upon existing research to inform and lend credibility to your arguments. In doing so, you must follow two rules:

- Always cite the source of a finding, idea, or argument that isn’t your own – no matter how much rewording you have done.
- Always put the findings, ideas, and arguments you cite into your own words; if a direct quote is absolutely necessary, put the text in quotation marks and provide a page number along with the usual citation.

Plagiarized or improperly-cited work will be subject to severe penalties and disciplinary action. Please be very careful. **When in doubt, cite!** For more information citing others’ work, please consult *Writing with Sources* (http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic657773.files/WritingSourcesHarvard.pdf). Another resource is the Harvard College Handbook chapter on academic dishonesty, available online (http://webdocs.registrar.fas.harvard.edu/ugrad_handbook/current/chapter2/academic_dishonesty.html)

Accommodations
Accommodations for students with disabilities must be approved and arranged by Rory Stein, Coordinator for Disability Services. Please contact Mr. Stein at 617 495-0977. Students who need accommodations should also contact the teaching staff to discuss and implement satisfactory arrangements for sectioning, course materials, and examinations. All discussions will remain confidential, although Disability Services may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation.

Required course materials
There are no required textbooks for this course. You will be reading articles published in psychology journals and edited books. Depending on the type of reading (article or book chapter) readings will be available either for download through the Harvard Library’s electronic resources portals or through one of the Harvard Libraries. More information will be shared about the readings during the first class.
Schedule, Topics, and Readings

The schedule, topic and readings are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Any changes will be announced in class.

Week 1: Wednesday January 26

Introduction
What is childhood trauma? How will we examine it in this course? Key themes and overview of topics to be covered. Discussion of course requirements.

Traumatic Stress in Childhood and Adolescence I

Week 2: Wednesday February 2
Class meeting cancelled due to severe weather

Week 3: Wednesday February 9

Traumatic Stress in Childhood and Adolescence II

Trauma and culture I

Week 4: Wednesday February 16

Trauma and culture II

Film "Close to Home"

**Week 5: Wednesday February 23**

Resilience and Posttraumatic growth

Trauma and Memory I

**Week 6: Wednesday March 2**

Trauma and Memory II

Neurobiology of childhood trauma
Week 7: Wednesday March 9

MIDTERM EXAMINATION

1-PAGE PAPER PREVIEW DUE (GRADUATE STUDENTS ONLY)

Week 8: Wednesday March 16
No class (Spring break)

Week 9: Wednesday March 23

Natural and man-made disaster

Film "When the levees broke"

Week 10: Wednesday March 30

Maltreatment

Film "Child of Rage"

Week 11: Wednesday April 6

Violence in school and community


Film "Elephant"

**1ST DRAFT OF PAPER DUE (GRADUATE STUDENTS ONLY)**

**Week 12: Wednesday April 13**

**War , Terrorism and refugee trauma**


Film: "Facing the truth with Bill Moyers"

**Week 13: Wednesday April 20**

**Traumatic loss**


Week 14: Wednesday April 27

Medical trauma and accidents

Week 15: Wednesday May 4

Prevention and intervention

Film "Strong at the broken places"

FINAL PAPER DUE (GRADUATE STUDENTS ONLY)

Week 16: Wednesday May 11

FINAL EXAM